

Washington, D.C. 20505

25 September 1978

The Honorable Charles Rose, Chairman
Subcommittee on Evaluation
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Rose:

Thanks for your letter of 7 September on the question of compartmented security clearances at the Department of Energy. I am sorry that I have not been back to you before this.

In large measure as a result of your suggestion, I have commenced a program of zero-based reviews of all compartmented security clearances. What this means is going into a given organization and requiring justification from scratch of each clearance presently in existence. Because of your suggestion, we started with one of the components of the Department of Energy, the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory. This was our pilot and test project. I'm happy to let you know that we have completed that zero-based review and reduced our compartmented clearances by 26% (from 184 to 135).

I look on this as a good first cut at the slightly more than 400 compartmented clearances within the Department of Energy. We are now proceeding on to other elements both within the Department of Energy and throughout the rest of the Intelligence Community. The first review within the Central Intelligence Agency, for instance, also resulted in about a 26% reduction.

This is an exciting program, and I am grateful for your stimulus that led to it. With the total number of clearances extant today and the large number of organizations through which they are scattered, we have a big task ahead of us. It will take some time, but I'm confident that we are going to make real progress. On top of this, I can also let you know that I have a group working to review the number of compartmented codewords which we have and how they relate to each other. I believe that we can do much in restructuring the codeword system to give us tighter security, including better control over how many people need these clearances. Overall, I think we are moving in the right direction and I am grateful for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely,

STANSFIELD TURNER

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